

VETERANS JOURNAL



PUBLISHED BY
FRANKLIN COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION
250 West Broad Street, Columbus Ohio 43215
(614) 462-2500 FAX (614) 462-2505
E-mail: veteransservice@co.franklin.oh.us
Website: www.co.franklin.oh.us/vets



Commissioners

*Stephen G. Commodore, VFW
Carl W. Swisher, American Legion
Larry W. Roberts, VVA
Wallace W. Sarto, AMVETS
Arthur W. Sprankel, DAV*

Spring 2005 Issue

*David M. Bradley, Director
Anna M. Henry, Administrative Assistant*

The information in this journal is being provided to make the veteran community aware of some current events, activities and veterans issues that are of mutual concern. From time to time, we will include some relevant information important enough to be repeated to insure that veterans and their families are aware of the full range of benefits and entitlements available to them.



Free Tax Preparation!

Many people who have low-to-moderate income can get free tax help from a trained volunteer. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program may be able to help you. VITA means volunteer income tax assistance. You can locate the VITA site nearest you and obtain other information by calling toll-free 1-800-829-1040.

If you are 60 or older, then the TCE program may be able to help you. TCE means tax

counseling for the elderly. For more information on this program call toll-free 1-800-829-1040.

The AARP operates the Tax-Aide counseling program. Trained volunteers help people of low-to-moderate income with special attention to seniors age 60 and over. For information call 1-888-227-7669 or visit the AARP Internet site.

Military personnel and their families are offered free tax help at many US military installations worldwide. The Armed Forces Tax Council supervises VITA sites on military installations. If you are in the military, ask your commander about this free service.

As a service to the Ohio State community, the Moritz College of Law offers free income tax preparation assistance to students

and low-income citizens of Columbus through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. The VITA clinic is held at Drinko Hall through April 12; hours of operation are from 5-9 p.m. on Tuesday nights and noon-4 p.m. on Saturday afternoons. There will be no clinic held on March 19, 22 or 26 because of the university's spring break. Service is on a first-come, first-served basis, so clients are encouraged to arrive early.



VETERANS JOURNAL



PHYSICAL EXAMS

Patients new to the VA are eligible for a physical exam. You do not require an appointment and you can usually be seen the same day. The entire process, including lab work, EKG, etc., which takes about an hour.

This would be a baseline physical exam and a starting point for any service related medical treatment, should you need it in the future. If you had a REFRAD (Return From Active Duty) physical exam when you left, VA would have no access to this medical record.

How do I get this exam?

It's simple. Just report to the Enrollment area on the first floor and tell them that you need to see the vesting doctor. They will make a medical chart and start the ball rolling!



1,500+ FITNESS CENTERS OFFER FREE MEMBERSHIPS TO SPOUSES OF DEPLOYED MILITARY PERSONNEL

Ladies Workout Express, Lady of America and Workout Express Fitness Centers

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL (Jan 4, 2005) – As a thank you for the dedication and hard work of our

nation's military personnel, Ladies Workout Express has volunteered to donate free memberships to the spouses of military personnel that have been deployed overseas. Effective immediately, individuals that have spouses deployed overseas will be able to have full use of the Ladies Workout Express facility at no charge for the entire duration of their spouse's deployment overseas.

With more than 1, 500 locations, individuals wishing to take advantage of this offer need only to bring proper documentation to the facility located at 1354 Cherry Bottom Road in Gahanna.

"We realize the great service that our men and women are performing overseas," says Scott Breault, spokesman for the Lady of America Franchise Corporation. "We are extremely proud and supportive of our troops and we wanted to give back in any way that we could. Giving away memberships to their loved ones at home is a just a small token of the gratitude we have for their dedication and unwavering stance in defending our freedoms."

The simplified, time-efficient workouts at Ladies Workout Express are designed just for women to keep the heart rate high enough to burn at least 600 calories in a half hour using only resistance training on a circuit of 20 hydraulic machines and aerobic stations. This 30-minute express workout has been designed to give women the most effective results in the least amount of time.

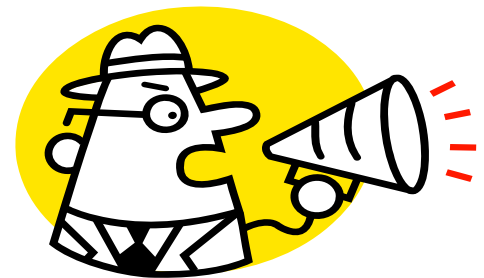
"Our staff here knows what works for women and women only. We offer the latest contemporary female-sized hydraulic equipment, personal training, sauna, cardio machines in and out of the circuit and it's all in a friendly, spacious, high-energy environment," says Kelly Gooch, owner of Ladies Workout Express. "Our workout is not only fast and effective but we also designed the club to cater to a wide range of women from the most avid workout fanatic to the fitness novice. Any woman can excel here

to achieve her health and fitness goals."

Without the ability to change resistance, the body will plateau and the equipment will not serve its purpose as a catalyst for improving your health and physical appearance. The competition's equipment only has one setting and therefore, their members will not be able to continually progress in their workouts, which is a problem when most members sign 1, 2 or 3 year contracts with these clubs. Usually, one of their members will reach a plateau around the six-month mark and will not be able to progress in their workouts. With the equipment at Ladies Workout Express, they will be able to progress infinitely. Therefore, no matter how you look at it, Ladies Workout Express is the better value and offers better results.

Ladies Workout Express 30- Minute Circuit Training Centers offers the health conscious women of the Gahanna and surrounding areas an excellent opportunity to get in shape in a safe, comfortable and family oriented environment.

To make sure that women are given every opportunity to experience Ladies Workout Express, there are now specials that offer great discounts and low monthly dues. For more information please contact Ladies Workout Express at (614) 414-LADY.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Diana Burford will be in the South office on Monday's only to assist with Financial Assistance. Wednesday-Friday Diana will be here at the main office, 250 W. Broad St. to assist veterans with filing for their benefits.



TWO NEW VA NEWSLETTERS: “OPERATIONS IRAQI FREEDOM/ENDURING FREEDOM,” AND “IONIZING RADIATION REVIEW”

(Agent Orange Review Vol. 21, No
1 November 2004)

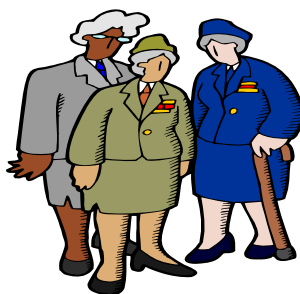
The environmental Agents Service (EAS), the office that produces this newsletter, has recently initiated the production of two additional newsletters called “Operations Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom Review” and “Ionizing Radiation Review.” Issues of these newsletters will be released on an irregular basis, as new information of interest to these veterans and families becomes available. The newsletter regarding service in Iraq and Afghanistan focuses on the possible health consequences of veterans who served in either Operation Iraqi Freedom, that began in 2003 or Operation Enduring Freedom that started in late 2001. The editor anticipates publication of each approximately twice annually.

The ionizing radiation newsletter describes the health problems experienced by veterans who were exposed to radiation during the atmospheric nuclear weapons testing program, during or shortly after the detonation of the atomic bombs in Nagasaki or Hiroshima, Japan, or in a variety of situations over the past few decades.

Internet users may wish to view these newsletters online. For the “Operations Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom Review” see

www.va.gov/GulfWar, and for the “Ionizing Radiation Review” see www.VA.gov/Irad. Hard copies can also be obtained from the Environmental Agents Service (131), VA Central Office, 810 Vermont Avenue, Washington, DC 20420, and from many field stations.

EAS also produces the “Agent Orange Review” newsletters, which provides information primarily for veterans who served in Vietnam, and numerous other publications.



WOMEN VETERANS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE SAME BENEFITS AS MEN

(Agent Orange Review Vol. 21, No
1 November 2004)

MYTH: *Women aren't veterans because they didn't serve in combat.*

FACT: Women who served in the military are veterans and are eligible for the same benefits and services as their male counterparts. Unfortunately, many women who served their country in military service do not consider themselves veterans because they did not serve in combat. Consequently, they have not applied for benefits and services to for which they are entitled.

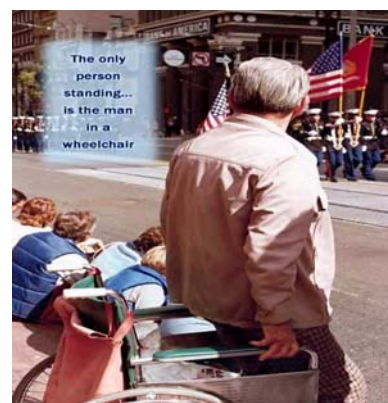
In recent years, VA has established a wide range of special services to provide appropriate, timely, and compassionate health care services to women veterans. These include the full range of services available to men as well as sexual trauma counseling, homeless women veterans programs, victims of domestic violence programs, and reproductive health care, including

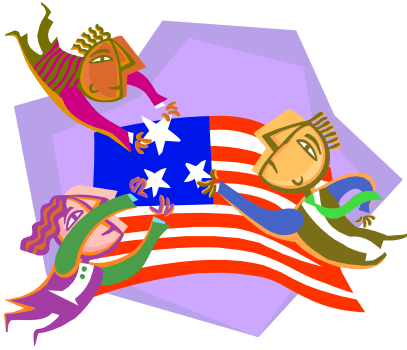
maternity care, and infertility evaluations.

Each VA medical center has a Women Veterans Program Manager to ensure that women veterans receive the proper attention. For additional information about these and other programs for women veterans, contact the Women Veterans Program Manager at the nearest medical center or outpatient clinic or see the VA Web site: www.va.gov/wyhp.

PAYING RESPECT

Below is a picture you have to see. We define patriotism, render respect and honor and pay tribute in many ways. Some people have a different level of devotion and a different level of pride, some just show it differently. Regardless, it is what's in your heart that matters. As you look at the picture below think of the millions of Americans who have come before us, served their country and then come home only to be forgotten, left behind and in some cases, even discarded by the same people they fought to defend. Remember those who valiantly served and were cursed when they came home. The gentleman in this picture is unknown to me. I don't know who he is, where he has been or even if he ever served a day in the military. BUT, by his action I would be willing to bet that he served his country, proudly and with honor, and in his heart is still serving by doing all that he can to show his love for his country. Please pass not only this picture on to your friends but also the message that is sent. God Bless the USA.

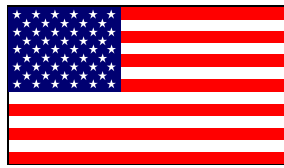




THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FLAG FOLDING

The American flag is folded
precisely 13 times and each fold
is symbolic

- The first fold represents life
- The second fold represents America's belief in eternal life
- The third symbolizes our remembrances of veterans who dedicated their lives for our land globally
- Fold number four stands for man's weaker nature and the sustenance given to man by the creator
- Fold number five is devoted to our nation
- The sixth fold symbolizes where our hearts lie
- The seventh fold is dedicated to America's armed forces
- The eighth fold is a praise for those who entered the valley of the shadow of death
- The ninth fold is dedicated to women, having shaped the character of men as love and commitment
- Fold ten is a dedication to fathers
- Fold eleven is representative of the lower portion of the seal of Kings David and Solomon
- Fold twelve is representative of eternity
- The thirteenth and final fold is complete when the stars of the flag are faced up



GENERATIONS OF VALOR



Pearl Harbor survivor Houston James of Dallas embraced Marine Staff Sgt. Mark Graunke Jr. during a Veterans Day commemoration in Dallas yesterday. Graunke lost a hand, a leg and an eye when he defused a bomb in Iraq last year. This week's images of U.S. troops in combat in Fallujah deepened the day's significance for many who attended tributes held in San Diego and across the nation. Associated Press

We truly take a lot for granted. Forget the football "heroes"

The above photo was taken by the Associated Press. The caption reads:

Pearl Harbor survivor Houston James of Dallas embraced Marine Staff Sgt. Mark Graunke Jr. during a Veteran's Day commemoration in Dallas. Graunke lost a hand, a leg, and an eye when he defused a bomb in Iraq last year. This week's images of U.S. troops in combat in Fallujah deepened the day's significance for many who attended tributes held in San Diego and across the nation.

The Honorable R. James "Jim" Nicholson Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs Department of Veterans Affairs

Washington, D.C.



R. James "Jim" Nicholson was nominated by President George W. Bush to serve as Secretary of Veterans Affairs on December 9, 2004, and was unanimously confirmed by the Senate on January 26, 2005. He was sworn into office on February 1, 2005. As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Nicholson is the principal advocate for veterans in the U.S. Government, ensuring that they receive the care, support, recognition and dignity they deserve for their service to our country. He also directs the Department of Veterans Affairs, the federal government's second largest Cabinet Department, responsible for a nationwide system of health care services, benefits programs, and national cemeteries for America's veterans and dependents. With a budget of more than \$69 billion for fiscal year 2005, VA employs approximately 230,000 people at hundreds of VA medical centers, clinics, nursing homes, benefits offices, and national cemeteries throughout the country.

Prior to his nomination, Mr. Nicholson served as U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, a position he held since 2001, where he became a well-known advocate in Rome for the elevation of human dignity, giving special emphasis to human trafficking, religious freedom, starvation and bio-tech food, HIV/AIDS, and international terrorism. He was knighted by Pope John Paul II in October 2003 for this work representing the U.S. to the Vatican.

Mr. Nicholson was born in 1938 and grew up on a tenant farm in northwest Iowa in a family of seven children. He is a 1961 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. He served eight years on active duty as a paratrooper and Ranger-qualified Army officer, then 22 years in the Army Reserve, retiring with the rank of Colonel. While serving in Vietnam, he earned the Bronze Star Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, the Meritorious Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry and two Air Medals.

Mr. Nicholson earned a master's degree from Columbia University in New York, and a law degree from the University of Denver. He practiced law in Denver, specializing in real estate, municipal finance and zoning law. In 1978 he founded Nicholson Enterprises, Inc., a developer of planned residential communities, and in 1987 he bought Renaissance Homes, which became an award-winning builder of quality custom homes.

In January 1986, Mr. Nicholson was elected committeeman from Colorado for the Republican National Committee (RNC). In 1993 he was elected vice-chairman of the RNC, and in January 1997, he was elected chairman of the RNC, where he served for four years, through the elections of 2000. Mr. Nicholson is married to the former Suzanne Marie Ferrell of Highland

Falls, New York, who is an accomplished artist. They are the parents of three adult children.
February 2005



Pryor Introduces Veterans Legislation in U.S. Senate

KATV-7 (Little Rock, AR), 1/25/05 Washington, D.C. (AP) - Senator Mark Pryor introduced a bill in the U-S Senate today that is aimed at making sure veterans receive all of the benefits they deserve. Pryor and Senator Norm Coleman of Minnesota brought up the legislation, called the Veterans' Benefits Outreach Act. The bill would require the VA to prepare an annual plan to identify veterans who are not enrolled in programs they are eligible for and enroll them.

The senators estimate that nearly 600 thousand veterans are not receiving the benefits they are entitled to receive simply because they don't know they should be getting them.

COLEMAN AND PRYOR INTRODUCE BIPARTISAN VETERANS BENEFITS OUTREACH BILL

MN and AR senators seeking to ensure that all veterans eligible for benefits receive them January 25th, 2005 - Washington, DC - Senators Norm Coleman (R-MN) and Mark Pryor (D-AR) today introduced the

Veterans Benefits Outreach Act, legislation designed to help ensure that all veterans get the benefits they have earned but for whatever

reason are not receiving. Coleman introduced this legislation during the 108th Congress but time did not permit action on the bill. It's estimated that nearly 600,000 veterans nationwide are not receiving the benefits they are entitled to, often due to a simple lack of knowledge that they are eligible. Coleman and Pryor's legislation would require the VA to prepare an annual plan to identify veterans who are not enrolled in programs they are eligible for and an action plan to enroll them.

"When we ask men and women in uniform to fight for freedom, our nation promises in return to take care of them when they return," Coleman said. "Providing basic health care is the least a grateful nation can do, and we do it gladly for our veterans. Tragically, there are veterans suffering from injuries inflicted on the battlefield that are not receiving the assistance they need and deserve because they simply don't know about the benefits available to them. It is clear that we need to do a better job of reaching out to veterans so they get the benefits they need. This bipartisan bill is an important step forward in solving this very serious problem and I am pleased to be working with my good friend Senator Pryor to make it happen."

"Veterans should not have to jump through hoops to learn about and receive the benefits they've earned. This bill will help our veterans by bringing essential information to them," Pryor said. "I believe this outreach program is even more critical as veterans return en masse from Iraq and Afghanistan. This bipartisan bill represents an opportunity to cut through bureaucracy and meet the challenges we foresee instead of waiting until benefit problems escalate for a new generation of veterans."

Contact(s):
Andy Brehm
108th CONGRESS
2d Session
S. 2638

VETERANS JOURNAL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require an annual plan on outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES July 12, 2004 Mr. COLEMAN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require an annual plan on outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act may be cited as the 'Veterans Benefits Outreach Act of 2004.'

SECTION 2. ANNUAL PLAN ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.

(a) ANNUAL PLAN REQUIRED- Subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 523 the following new section:

Sec. 523A. Annual plan on outreach activities

(a) ANNUAL PLAN REQUIRED-

The Secretary shall prepare each year a plan for the outreach activities of the Department for the following year.

(b) ELEMENTS- Each annual plan under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Plans for efforts to identify veterans who are not enrolled or registered with the Department for benefits or services under the programs administered by the Secretary.

(2) Plans for informing veterans and their dependents of modifications of the benefits and services under the programs administered by the Secretary, including eligibility for medical and nursing care and

(c) COORDINATION IN DEVELOPMENT- In developing an annual plan under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with the following:

(1) Directors or other appropriate officials of organizations recognized by the Secretary under section 5902 of this title.

(2) Directors or other appropriate officials of State and local education and training programs.

(3) Representatives of non-governmental organizations that carry out veterans outreach programs.

(4) Representatives of State and local veterans' employment organizations.

(5) Businesses and professional organizations.

(6) Other individuals and organizations that assist veterans in adjusting to civilian life.

(d) INCORPORATION OF ASSESSMENT OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL PLANS- In developing an annual plan under subsection (a), the Secretary shall take into account the lessons learned from the implementation of previous annual plans under such subsection.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT- The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 523 the following new item:
523A. Annual plan on outreach activities.

SEC. 3. APPEAL OF CLAIMS DENIED BECAUSE OF LOSS OF RECORDS RESULTING FROM 1973 FIRE AT THE NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop and implement procedures by which veterans may appeal claims denied by the Secretary on the basis that records destroyed in the 1973 fire at the National Personnel Records Center could substantiate such claims.



Thursday
March 17th

St Patrick's
Day

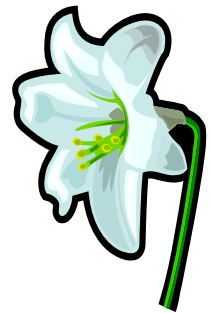
Sunday
April 3rd

Daylight
Savings
Time
Begins



Sunday
March 27th

Easter



Sunday
April 3rd

Daylight
Savings
Time

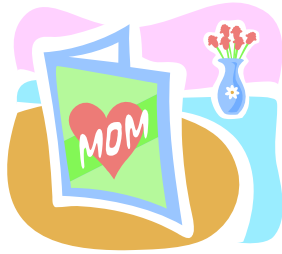


Wednesday
April 27th

Secretaries
Day

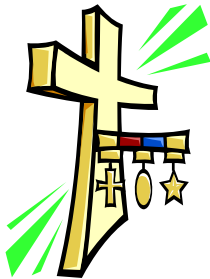
Sunday
May 8th

Mother's
Day



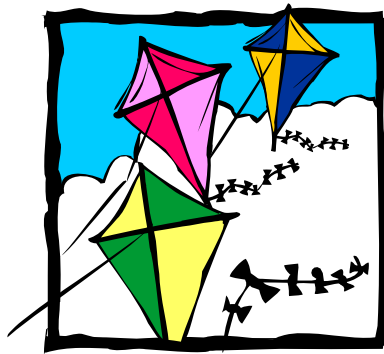
Saturday
May 21st

Armed
Forces
Day



Monday
May 30th

Memorial
Day



Count-Down for Spring

One is the flag fluttering in the breeze,

Two are the kites careening by the trees.

Three are the worms wriggling in the ground.

Four are the robins listening for worm's sound.

Five are the daffodils wearing green and yellow.

Six are the calves, following mother's bellow.

Seven are the crocuses, bursting in the air.

Eight are the tulips, swaying everywhere.

Nine are the raindrops, dampening everything.

Ten are the children welcoming the spring.

Robert McCracken



FRANKLIN COUNTY
VETERANS SERVICE
COMMISSION
250 W BROAD ST
COLUMBUS OH 43215-2787

